

Delaware State Police Investigating Increase in Vehicle Thefts- New Castle County

New Castle County- The Delaware State Police would like to warn the public about a recent increase in thefts of vehicles in the New Castle area. The Delaware State Police, Troop 2 Criminal Investigative Unit, has recently seen an increase of vehicle thefts occurring in the Delaware State Police jurisdiction. A majority of the thefts have been occurring at gas stations in which a vehicle was left unattended, idling, or unlocked with the keys left in the vehicle. In many cases, the most common practice is a victim leaving their car running in a parking lot while they go into a store for a quick purchase.

Some car thieves look for cars idling in parking lots. Once they see a car is left unattended, all they have to do is walk up and drive away. The thefts of vehicles can be prevented. Please make sure when you exit your vehicle, your doors are locked, you remove your keys, and you park in a conspicuous location.

Delaware law states; (Title 21, § 4182) Unattended motor vehicle. No person driving or in charge of a motor vehicle shall permit it to stand unattended without first stopping the engine, locking the ignition, removing the key and effectively setting the brake thereon and, when standing upon any grade, turning the front wheels to the curb or side of the highway. For a first offense, a fine of \$25.00 – \$75.00 can be imposed.

If you have any information regarding these cases, please contact Delaware State Police Troop 2 Criminal Investigations

Unit by calling 302-365-8560. Information may also be provided by calling Delaware Crime Stoppers at 1-800-TIP-3333 or via the internet at <http://delaware.crimestoppersweb.com>.

If you or someone you know is a victim or witness of crime or have lost a loved one to a sudden death and are in need of assistance, the Delaware State Police Victim Services Unit/Delaware Victim Center is available to offer you support and resources 24 hours a day through a toll free hotline 1800 VICTIM-1. (1800 842-8461). You may also email the unit Director at debra.reed@state.de.us.

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Presented by Public Information Officer, Senior Corporal Heather Pepper

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